of ships for which convoy will have to be supplied is more manageable than he had thought. Further, the losses which he last reported to me on the subject were not in his opinion sufficient to justify the adoption of this experiment, which, he warned me, might involve a great disaster. Now, however, he calculates that he could afford to lose three ships out of every convoy without being worse off than at present, and he therefore thinks the experiment justifiable. . . .

I much regret that some time must elapse before convoys can be in full working order, and I consider that the Admiralty ought to press on with the matter as rapidly as possible.

As the views of the Admiralty are now in complete accord with the views of the War Cabinet on this question, and as convoys have just come into operation on some routes and are being organised on others, further comment is unnecessary. . . ."

The " complete accord " turned out in actual working to be a rather optimistic estimate of the situation. As my minute shows, neither Admiral Jellicoe nor Admiral Duff really believed in the principle of convoys, though they were willing to assent to a cautious trial of this expedient. They had been convinced against their will and at heart remained of the same opinion still.

The High Admirals had at last been persuaded by the " Convoyers " not perhaps to

take action, but to try action. But there was a reluctance and a tardiness in their movements. They acted as men whose doubts are by no means removed, and who therefore proceed with excessive caution and with an ill-concealed expectation that their forebodings will